



Life in the other

LANE

THE MASS LIVES! LONG LIVE THE MASS... (pretty please). I cannot tell you how good it feels to be able to write that. After four long and difficult months of self-hypnosis and cosmological intervention, our reincarnation has been reborn. Like Yogi said, "It's like deja vu all over again!"

If you'll look back at your June issue of *AutoSport*, the cover picture required no real explanation - we had endured a monumental boo-boo at Tiadaghton. In a feeble attempt to maintain my status as a card carrying optimist (you know, the type that will gaily dig through a pile of s— knowing there's a horsy hiding in there somewhere) I confidently reported that we planned to be ready to go again by Defi. Well, two things happened to disturb that schedule. First, I had no inkling that there were certain Laws of Rallying that had to be satisfied. Second, how was I to know that Defi would go and get cancelled?

This experience has taught me several valuable lessons in both the Laws of Rallying and the Laws of Marriage. Law of Rallying # 24 - Never under estimate the long term devastation caused by an abrupt and unplanned confrontation with a stone wall. Law of Marriage # 2 - Never under estimate the long term devastation caused by an abrupt and unplanned confrontation with a stone wall. (In case anyone is curious, Law of Marriage # 1 is a generic explanation for any weird behavior, exhibited by either spouse, that was not at all evident before the "I do's" were traded.) Live and learn.

The remainder of the spring and early summer of this year were pretty sad around ole Chateau Walrich. The MASS sat on the trailer in the backyard looking all pathetic while TH and Doyle (a late season draft pick whose psychological profile indicates a propensity for dirty fingernails) kept themselves busy making fiberglass parts for other 510 fanatics while deciding if this rallying business was really worth it. Since my assignments during that period were to straighten out the vanity tag on the MASS and plant the dahlia's you will certainly understand that I had little time for self-reflection.

It wasn't until mid-summer when UPS delivered the MIG welder and TH disappeared early one Saturday morning with the trailer that I understood that the mourning period was over. He returned with a donor 510 located by our new pro-rally friends, John and Debbie Barbieri up in Nyack. There wasn't really much to recommend this specimen - it was rusting out where Datsun's seem to want to rust

out, it was three different colors and there wasn't a ghost of a chance that it could move under its own steam. Being a veteran at this game, I knew better than to ask silly questions. In time it would all become obvious.

In what now seems a nanosecond, the MASS was relieved of its crumpled roof, its shattered windshield, both its front fenders and the hood. With warp speed, pieces of the donor vehicle were measured, precisely cut at the appropriate points and transferred to the MASS. At this point the MIG welder was pressed into action and within a weekend a new bonnet was in place. In the weekends that followed, fiberglass parts filled the other gaping holes in the MASS as the sound of sanders and grinders went through me like nails on a chalkboard.

Perhaps the saddest part of this whole process was to see TH and Doyle taking off all the decals and banner decorations that we had carefully spaced here and there on the MASS' body. They told the casual observer that this was no rinky-dink, fly-by-night competition vehicle, this was THE MASS. It advertised our sponsors, HELLA, GARDEN CITY AUTO BODY, TOKICO, CENTERFORCE, without whom we could not have considered the whole process to begin with. But, not to worry. New decals have been ordered, a fancier color scheme has been designed and as I write this our good friend Tony Zanello's son, Anthony is demonstrating that he is well on his way to mastering those autobody talents his Dad has perfected.

With summer now over and the leaves beginning their inevitable change of color it seems odd that the MASS should be coming back to life just as Mother Nature has other plans. So, to get back in sync we will spend the winter carefully tearing down the engine and tranny just to make sure that when the purple heads of the crocus pop up and fill our gardens with colors again they will also be greeted with the muffled warble of the MASS' turbo powered engine springing back to life.

The Laws of Rallying and Marriage should not be violated. We'll see you at Tiadaghton '90, count on it!